

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

INTERN PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

EMPLOYER: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

CONTACT PERSON'S NAME/TITLE: Chris Hammond/Wildlife Biologist

ADDRESS: 490 North Meridian Road

CITY: Kalispell

STATE: MT

ZIP: 59901

PHONE: 406-751-4582

EMAIL ADDRESS: chammond@mt.gov

DATE OF ANNOUNCEMENT: Monday, January 9, 2012

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Thursday, March 1, 2012 at 5:00 PM (postmarked)

****STUDENTS MUST BE CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN A UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE****

POSITION TITLE: Loon/Bear Intern

OF POSITIONS: 1

LOCATION(S): Kalispell, MT

WORK START/END DATES: Approximately May 10th – August 10th

HOURS/WEEK: 40

TRAINING/ORIENTATION DATES: April 28th (Attendance is mandatory)

COMPENSATION (PAY, PER DIEM, HOUSING, VEHICLE, ETC):

\$8.50 – \$9/hr (depending on previous experience and funding) plus per diem at state rates; housing available at Thompson Chain of Lakes. *There is no overtime for this position, paid holidays, or additional compensation for working on holidays or weekends.* A state vehicle will likely be available. **Individuals may need to use personal vehicle for part of all of summer if state/federal vehicle not available. Interns would be compensated for mileage at approximately \$0.50/mile.**

POSITION DESCRIPTION:

Interns educate boaters, anglers, and other recreating members of the public visiting or living on Montana's common loon lakes about loon biology, nesting requirements, disturbance effects, and loon sign program. In coordination with local biologists, interns conduct common loon surveys, deploy and collect floating signs; give campground or other presentations; monitor loons for leg bands, keep daily log of activities; prepares final summary report. Combined with other duties, interns may also present information on grizzly and black bear habits; work with bear or lion management specialists, education public or private landowners on best methods to avoid attracting bears to homes, campsites, and vehicles; provide information about public land food storage requirements; and give presentations to people at campgrounds, meetings, schools, outdoor events, homeowners meetings, citizen organizations and other venues. Interns may also help with nongame inventories, management and habitat work on local WMAs or other important wildlife duties. Contact Chris Hammond in Region One for more details for combined intern position duties after January 16th, 2012.

Students would work directly with FWP biologists and/or work in closely with local Forest Service biologists on the Common Loon Working Group to provide public outreach at key common loon nesting lakes that receive intense public use during the common loon-nesting season. Students would also work

with bear specialists, wardens, and local federal or state biologists for the bear education and outreach portion .

SKILLS, ABILITIES, KNOWLEDGE NEEDED (EDUCATION; UNDERGRAD/GRAD LEVEL, SUGGESTED/REQUIRED MAJORS):

Good communication skills, ability to work independently; 1-2 years in biology, wildlife biology, ornithology; or wildlife or recreation management or fisheries; ability to use 4-wheel drive vehicles and motor or non-motorized boats (canoes or kayaks) to access lakes. Able to carry 35-50 lbs. Should have own high quality binoculars (10x40) and be able to use high powered spotting scopes for identify birds and color band combinations. **Interns will need to keep in close contact with multiple agencies and organizations or individuals depending on their location and assignments.**

APPLICATION MATERIALS/PROCEDURES (RESUME, COVER LETTER, REFERENCES, ETC.):

Submit 1 digital copy of current **resume** identifying experience and skills related to the intern position description with list of 3 reference contacts. Also send **cover or transmittal letter** explaining the reasons for your interest in the internship, which internship location(s) you would prefer, personal vehicle that you may have for use if needed, and why you are qualified to do the work. Send above to Chris Hammond, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 490 N. Meridian Rd. Kalispell, MT 59901 or to chammond@mt.gov no later than 5:00 pm on March 1, 2012. Selections are generally made within 2 weeks of closing date.

COOPERATING SPONSORS OF PROJECT:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Nongame Program, Regional Wildlife and Fisheries Programs, Living With Wildlife Program, Parks Programs, Montana Loon Society (Non profit), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana Dept. of Natural Resources, Flathead, Lolo, and Kootenai National Forests, Plum Creek Timber Co./Avista Corporation, Ashley Lake Property Owners Assoc.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: (;HOUSING OF ANY KIND PROVIDED OR POSSIBLY AVAILABLE I.E. TRAILER, FREE CAMP SPOT, BASEMENT APARTMENT, EXTRA SLEEPING ROOM, ETC.):

The Loon Ranger program began in 2000 with a single Loon Ranger intern in the Blackfoot and Clearwater Valleys. The program has grown to at least 3 loon ranger interns that cover most of the common loon-breeding habitat in northwest Montana. The Forest Service has also included loon ranger type duties in the Forest Service Wildlife Technician program. Common loons are highly vulnerable to disturbance during the nesting season. Montana supports only about 60-80 pairs of common loons. Of these, only about 30 pairs produce 34-45 chicks each year.

In recent years, the Forest Service issued several food storage orders to reduce the conflicts between campers and bears in the backcountry. There are also a need to educate homeowners, landowners, and others on reducing other bear attractants such as animal carcasses, barbeques, gardens, composting, and bird feeders. Based on the success in the Swan Valley in 2006 and 2007 where an intern provided both loon and bear educational needs during the summer, the partners believe this model could be expanded to other locations. In 2008, the Blackfoot Clearwater intern also worked to implement habitat improvements on the nearby Wildlife Management Area. Other nongame inventory work may be added to Region Two internship duties for the latter part of summer. The focus of early summer would be on identifying active loons nesting areas in need of floating signs and management. Middle summer activities might include bear education, habitat, inventory or other duties while monitoring loon-nesting areas. The end of summer could be totally devoted to bear education or other duties. Duration of the internship will be based on program and funding secured.

Loon training is usually the first weekend in May is not optional. It includes basics of common loon identification and ecology, public outreach tools and methods, data recording, contacts, daily guidance,

information on the use of floating signs and other materials during a full day of required training usually during the first weekend in May provided by the Montana Loon Society and other agencies. A notebook with data forms, contact information, maps, and other materials are given to each loon ranger at the beginning of the field season and returned to FWP at the end of the internship. Each intern completes a year-end report covering the extent of their efforts, summary of monitoring results by lake or visits, and recommendations for the next field season. They should also be able to assist in the entry of the loon data into the statewide loon database. Training for other duties will be determined after the start of the internship.